



UNITED
MACEDONIAN
DIASPORA
ОБЕДИНЕТА МАКЕДОНСКА ДИЈАСПОРА

Friday, October 14, 2011

Dear Friend,

On Thursday, June 23, 2011, we attended a dinner with United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) Board and Council members in Washington, D.C., during the 3rd Annual UMD Global Conference. That night, UMD's new program, the *Macedonian Companions*, was presented to us. Immediately, we embraced and pledged our support for this bold, constructive initiative.

We have committed to raise the necessary financial resources to help solidify UMD as the leading, unitary representative body of our global Macedonian Diaspora communities, and in so doing to become the most formidable and influential voice of the Macedonian cause within the political power centers of Washington, D.C., New York City, Brussels, Ottawa, Canberra and elsewhere.

The two of us have each spent countless hours and millions of dollars of our personal funds advancing the Macedonian cause over the past five decades. We have done (and continue to do) so because we believe in Macedonia, in the just cause of fighting for our people's fundamental human rights, and in the rich heritage and pride that is in our bones and blood.

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the Republic of Macedonia's independence as a free and sovereign nation-state – a symbol of pride to Macedonians around the world. Consider the generations of our forefathers, Babas and Dedos, who suffered, fought and died for this centuries-long dream. Our work, however, is not finished with only the independence of the Republic of Macedonia.

In 2004, a group of young professional Macedonians in their 20's and 30's formed UMD as an organization dedicated to uniting our people across the globe, for the purpose of becoming an effective advocate for the greater good of our beloved culture and identity. UMD's achievements throughout the world over the past seven years are impressive. However, we, two Macedonians of an earlier generation, recognize the potential for even greater accomplishments by UMD in the future, as there is still much more needed to get done.

Today, we are writing to ask you to support UMD, so that it may persevere in its noble and important work. Both of us have provided significant financial resources to UMD, and we pledge to continue to do so. However, the organization's mission cannot be sustained by only a few individuals but, rather, it must be fueled by the generosity of many Macedonians. UMD's mission is universal, and it is imperative that its financial support is derived from the broader community so that everyone is involved in the success of our agenda.

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During the 3rd Annual UMD Global Conference Gala, UMD launched the *Macedonian Companions* program. We believe that the *Macedonian Companions* campaign is the first of its kind in the history of Macedonian organizations. Just as *Alexander's Companions* were the most effective military cavalry unit of the ancient world, so too will the present-day *Companions* be a special group that supports the essence of our culture and people, thereby spearheading achievement of our highest goals. The program is designed to attract 300 Macedonians and friends of Macedonia from around the globe to each donate \$1,000 per year for three years, thereby furnishing UMD with an annual operating budget of at least \$300,000 for each of three years.

Thirty-five Macedonians and friends of Macedonia from throughout the global Macedonian Diaspora stood up proudly at the Gala pledging their support for this important initiative. Since the Gala, 23 more individuals pledged their support, bringing the number to 58 *Macedonian Companions* to date.

Under the *Macedonian Companions* program, UMD will prepare annual strategic plans that define its intended objectives, as well as year-end reports assessing its progress, achievements and any shortcomings relative to its prior strategic plan. The UMD Advisory Council-*Macedonian Companions subcommittee* will be the managing group responsible for overseeing the *Macedonian Companions* program. The funds raised from the *Macedonian Companions* campaign will be earmarked for use starting in January 2012.

After centuries of compromises and external dictates, it is time for us to define our future; it is time we decide what our children's legacy will be! Our destiny has been tormented by many, and only as a united and determined community will we prevail in this global fight. We count on your generosity to become the next *Macedonian Companion*, thereby supporting the tremendous work of the talented and dedicated young Macedonians who lead UMD on our behalf!

Won't you please join us, in this timely and important quest? Together, we can and will help write the future chapters of our people's history, so that we preserve our name, identity, and heritage for generations to come!

In order to pledge your much-needed and material support of the *Macedonian Companions* program, please contact UMD's Vice-President, Aleksandar Mitreski, at amitreski@umdiaspora.org. Of course, should you have any question for either of us please contact Aleksandar and he will re-direct your questions to us. You may also call Aleksandar or UMD's President, Meto Koloski at (202) 294-3400. All donations in Canada and the United States are tax-deductible; UMD is working on obtaining charitable status in Australia as well.

Sincerely yours,



George Atanasoski
Daytona Beach, Florida, United States



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